Call Me By My Chosen Name

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/8824030.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Hannibal (TV)
Relationship:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter
Characters:	Will Graham, Will Graham's Dogs, Hannibal Lecter, Abigail Hobbs, OMC
Additional Tags:	Domestic Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter, True Love, friends are family, Confessions, Abigail is a good person, Jack Crawford isn't here to fuck it up, germaphobia
Language:	English
Series:	Part 19 of Friendship is Not My Forte
Stats:	Published: 2016-12-12 Words: 5,617 Chapters: 1/1

Call Me By My Chosen Name

by Azure_K_Mello

Summary

The day after Will's party, he learns truths about Abigail and half-truths about Hannibal.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

The morning was beautiful and bright and Will woke up feeling happy. He painted the walls of his mind, at ease in his own skin and knowing that Bev had said she wasn't going to let Jack call him in made him happy. He opened his eyes and saw the friendship bracelet on his wrist. It made him smile. But then he thought of the stack of papers she had handed him and felt his heart sink a little. He looked at Hannibal, sleeping peacefully. He'd worked so hard on the party and Will wanted to let him sleep. Sitting up he smiled at the painting on the wall. The beautiful sight made him feel warm inside. The image made him feel safe, but the act of Hannibal's creation made Will feel so loved. He slipped out of bed and shrugged into his robe. He took the papers from his office and downstairs Will set the coffee to brew as he let the dogs out. Then, he took his coffee onto the porch and drank it as he started to read.

"'I remember you. You killed my dad.' Those were the first words I ever spoke to Will Graham. What I should have said was, 'I remember you. You saved me.' 'I remember you. You held the wound closed after my dad slit my throat.' I had options but I was scared, sad, hurt. My life went sidewise five minutes before he entered it. I watched my dad kill my mom and then he was cutting open my throat and telling me it would all be over soon. And then there was Will, shouting that he was the FBI, shouting at my dad to put down the knife, and then—after my father threw me away as I bled out, I watched Will Graham shoot my father ten times.

"I would never have expected to have grown a relationship with the man. At first brush, he was strange, a man who avoided eye contact and emotions, someone clearly uncomfortable in his own skin. He felt guilty about leaving me an orphan so he visited. And then, slowly our relationship changed. We talked about guilt and emotion. It was easier to talk to him than anyone else. Dr. Bloom is a wonderful psychiatrist and Hannibal is too. Hannibal was there in the kitchen but he wasn't in the moment.

"In the moment it was me, Dad and Will. Talking to Will, the person who most nearly shared that moment, is somehow natural. It is easier to talk to him because he is just as uncomfortable talking about it as I am. Hannibal and Dr. Bloom talk about uncomfortable things for a living. Will is a scientist and the talks are just as far out of his wheelhouse as they are mine. So, yes, talking to him about it is natural. But, so is talking about books, about movies and about happier times with my family.

"Even now, knowing Will better, he is still strange. He is still uncomfortable in his own skin but has a nice smile and a good sense of humor. He is kind and warm, though he still avoids eye contact. He has seven dogs and cooks delicious meals. He has a neurological condition that makes him a little off; he also has a giant collection of zydeco music that he sings along to while cooking barefoot. When I talk he listens. He is never judgmental, always open. He's not a man who likes touch but he hugs me. He isn't a man with many people in his life yet he opened it for me. It's the little ways people accommodate you that make a difference. Will always makes sure there's diet ginger ale in his fridge for me.

"I envied Marissa her brother and then I lost my family, I lost Marissa and I got a brother. Sometimes I feel guilty about having both him and Hannibal in my life — like I don't deserve anything good after what my dad did but then I think about losing everyone I loved and… I'm glad Will and Hannibal were in my kitchen. Will is redecorating a bedroom in his

house for me, I lost my family and gained a new one in the same moment. A man who once felt nothing but guilt when he looked at me now sees a kid sister. And where I once looked at him and saw the man who killed my father, I now see one of the few people I feel comfortable around without covering the scar on my neck. I hope he doesn't feel guilty anymore. He didn't kill my dad; he saved my life."

Will jumped at a touch to his shoulder, he looked up to see Hannibal, "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to startle you."

"I'm reading how Abigail sees me."

"How does she see you?"

"Very clearly but with a rose-tinted view. That's what affection does, tints the view."

"Are you going to ask her to change it?"

"I'm only a few hundred words in, but so far, no. There's nothing but honesty here. None of what she has said is private. I didn't know how much she liked that I keep soda here for her. It's sort of sad how far little things can go."

"I would say it's nice that someone takes the time to notice the little things. The smallest of gestures can make a world of difference. How does she describe you?" asked Hannibal.

"Strange but highly likable," said Will.

"That's a bit rude," said Hannibal with a sniff.

"No, I like it. It's far more honest than if she described me as 'chill.'" Will responded with a smile. "I know she means this, that she loves me and views me as family. We all have flaws. Ignoring them isn't love, acknowledging them but not caring is."

"Chill?" repeated Hannibal.

"It's a word the kids use nowadays."

"You turned thirty-three yesterday, Will. If you don't use, neither do the kids." Will laughed. "Are you invested in reading that right this minute or would you like to come back to bed and enjoy this slow morning?"

Hannibal was looking at him with bedroom eyes and Will said, "This can wait." His words came out quickly and Hannibal laughed. Last night he had fallen into bed exhausted. He knew birthday sex was a thing enjoyed by many people but social interaction, even with people he liked, was exhausting. Instead of sex, he and Hannibal had cuddled for only a couple of minutes before Will had passed out. Now he wanted it. He whistled to the dogs who regrouped on him. "I want to try something new."

"Really?" asked Hannibal, sounding surprised.

“Don’t get too excited. It’s nothing outrageous. I just want you to have me on my side. I want to try you behind me, it’s still very vanilla.” Will said, ducking his head.

“Don’t feel like you’re letting me down,” said Hannibal. “I love you. I love our life. I love what we do in bed. Don’t apologize. If you like this, wonderful, if you don’t, we’ll stop. Don’t put pressure on yourself in bed. And don’t classify it as vanilla. To others this might seem like nothing. They’re not in our bedroom, opinions other than ours don’t matter.”

“If this sex goes very poorly and I freak out, don’t let me forget to pick up the floor buffer. I have to pick it up by four.”

Hannibal laughed, “We’ll stop before you get lost like that.” They climbed the stairs threw off their robes and kissed as they fell into bed. They made out, stroking each other to hardness and enjoying the touch of skin to skin. Will didn’t know if he would ever get used to this — to enjoying his body with someone else. He loved the way Hannibal’s eleven fingers skated over his flesh. He turned in Hannibal’s arms. Hannibal kissed his neck, back and shoulders, running his hands over Will’s chest. “Tell me if anything is distressing.”

“Just talk to me,” said Will.

“You’re so beautiful, mind and body. Every part of you, inside and out, is lovely.” He cuddled Will, pulling him flush against him. “How are you feeling?”

“Four,” said Will.

“You shouldn’t be at a four in bed.”

“I’m trying,” Will said.

“I didn’t mean it as a reprimand,” Hannibal assured him.

It was odd. Hannibal always slept behind him. That wasn’t distressing. He liked sex with Hannibal so he couldn’t figure out why this was overwhelming. “Just stay like this for a minute; this is good. I don’t know what’s wrong with me. I know it’s you behind me; I love you; I trust you. I’ve never been assaulted or attacked sexually. I don’t know what it is.”

“What’s wrong with what we’ve been doing?” asked Hannibal. “Sex between us is wonderful. Why are you pushing something you don’t want?”

“Because I don’t want half my body to be off limits to you. I don’t want us to be limited in bed.”

“Roll onto your stomach. I’m going to give you a massage, work out the knots.”

Will did as told and Hannibal started to massage his shoulders, it felt nice and Will just let himself enjoy it and drift. “That feels good, Hannibal, thank you.” Hannibal focused on his stab wound. “Thank you.” Will felt himself relax and unwind.

“Is that better?” asked Hannibal.

“Yes,” Will breathed out. Hannibal kissed a path over his back and kept massaging him and Will moaned under his hands.

“Tell me if this becomes too much,” Hannibal said, speaking softly against his skin before he slowly started to kiss and lick and touch and finger Will, opening him with infinite care and patience.

“Hannibal, amazing,” Will moaned.

Hannibal rimmed and kissed him until he was boneless, writhing, begging. “Will you move to your side, please, Will?”

Will nodded, still nervous but painfully turned on, and rolled to his side. He heard the condom being opened but he couldn’t see Hannibal. Then, without Will needing to say anything Hannibal leaned over him and Will could see him, he breathed out and gasped as Hannibal entered him so slowly. “Hannibal, amazing,” he repeated. Hannibal kissed his cheek and panted into Will’s neck. Will moved with him as Hannibal slid in and out of his body. Will craned his neck to kiss Hannibal. “Hold me tighter, please, hold me tighter.” Hannibal tugged him closer until their bodies were completely flush against each other. “Perfect, thank you. Love having your body against mine. Keep me so close.”

Hannibal kissed his neck and month and said, so softly, “You feel divine,” He started to stroke Will’s erection, looking down his body from over his shoulder, “I like this angle a great deal for both the sensation and view.” Will came with a moan and Will arched against Hannibal, he writhed and Hannibal held him impossibly closer. The other man panted into his neck and then stilled. “Incredible.” He stroked Will continually, before pulling out of him gently.

Usually, they cuddled with Hannibal curled behind him. Now, Will rolled over and settled his arms around the man. They were silent, relaxed and Will breathed out, focusing on it, on the noise of his pulse. Deep breaths in and slow breaths out: inhale from the toes, exhale for ten beats.

"Are you doing an exercise right now?" asked Hannibal, speaking with a mix of disbelief and amusement.

"It's a post-stress breathing exercise, to calm down all the chemicals that are pulsing through me. It's supposed to ease the come down from fight or flight, regulating breath to help ease the strain. It's more a psychosomatic treatment than actual biological chemistry."

"Is it working?"

"Yeah, it's helping, so are your hands and the puffs of your breath on my skin. I won't be stressed out next time. That was wonderful but terrifying."

"We don't have to do that again."

"I liked the angle, I liked you holding me. I'm just not good with new things. Did you like it?"

Hannibal stroked his cheek, "I like sex when you're calm, when you're happy. Sex when you're distressed isn't alluring. You're so gorgeous when you're relaxed and open. I care more for you than for anyone in the universe. I don't like it when you're distressed. I don't like playing a role in your panic. While the angle was amazing and the smell of your hair was intoxicating, the tightness of your shoulders wasn't."

“I know, I was stressed and scared but it felt good and next time I won’t need so much foreplay to want this.”

“I enjoy touching your body, kissing and stroking. There’s no delicacy like the taste of your skin and no sensation is as nice as running my fingers over your flesh. The way our sweat mixes together is so perfect.” Will leaned up from where he had tucked himself against Hannibal’s side to share a long slow kiss. “I like foreplay, but I like it significantly more when it’s out of desire instead of comfort. Which, is not to say I don’t like comforting you, I just prefer sex to be about sex: lust, love and pleasure.”

“I love you, Hannibal, feels so good when you’re inside of me. Kissing feels good too.” They fell to making out, cuddling. Hannibal’s stomach growled a Will smiled against his lips. “Let’s have waffles.”

Hannibal nodded, “I’d like that.” Will and Hannibal went down to the kitchen to cook together. They drank coffee even though it had gone noon. They ate breakfast and Hannibal said, “You should go back to reading, I have a lot of transcribing to do.”

Will brought Abigail’s writing to the couch. Daniel climbed into Will’s lap and he stroked the dog as Hannibal settled next to him with his tablet and a large number of files. Everything she wrote about Will was very kind. None of it was too prying but all of it was more accurate than the paper Matt had written for the Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology. She’d learned more about him and his mind without screwing him or screwing him over. It was all piecemeal, excerpts from a whole, moments pulled from their time in Abigail’s story, creating a cohesive view of her perception of him. Putting it down he said, “Abigail is a good girl.”

“All okay?”

“Absolutely,” said Will. He picked up the second set of pages. Will was more afraid of these pages than the others. Within minutes, he found himself proven correct; this was so much worse than anything Abigail could have said about him. “Two days before my father slit my throat, I realized that something was terribly, terribly wrong. I never really watched local news. Mom watched CNN in the morning and I would hear the big headlines but that was it. I wasn’t clueless about the world but I never watched the news at 10. If I had, people would be alive.

“A pretty girl was on a train. She was playing with her keys. I was across the aisle and a few rows down. I saw that she had a keychain from one of the colleges I had applied to. I went over and talked to her to ask her about the school — she loved her classes, really liked her professors, hated how overcrowded the dorm was. She was going home to her parent’s house to feed the cat and sleep in her own quiet room. She described her house and her street — her favorite quiet place. We laughed and talked about her roommate, her friends, the fact that the cafeteria was pretty good. We talked about the horrors of college applications and why

staying in state made sense for me. We laughed some more. She got off at her stop and I went back to my seat next to my dad. He asked me who my friend was, if she liked the college, I told him everything she had said to me. He was my dad, I always told him everything. Three days later, while folding my laundry, I turned on the TV and saw her face. The girl on the train was Elise Nichols.

“It shook me to see her, knowing that I might have been one of the last people to see her alive. There was a number at the bottom of the screen to call if you had any information. Then it started talking about The Minnesota Shrike, I knew that he was the serial killer getting girls on college campuses. I hadn’t been paying much attention to it. I was busy with soccer, debate, college applications and SATs. The Minnesota Shrike was a very distant idea. The news showed pictures of all the victims I realized two things: they all looked like me and I recognized some of them.

“Susan Olsen had a print of The Scream on her dorm room wall but the person screaming was wearing a party hat. Daria Woodword was thinking of changing majors but was torn. Rachel Winn hadn’t slept in three days because of a paper but she was really enthusiastic about the topic and pleased with her essay so she was pretty fine with it.

“If you ask Will or Hannibal, or anyone who meets me now, they would tell you that I’m reserved, maybe shy. I wasn’t always like this. I used to be friendly, inquisitive. I was excited for college so I spoke to as many people as I could while I was on campus tours and visits. I don’t remember meeting Ashley Anderson, Lauren Sorenson, Daphne Latimer or Patricia Cohen but I spoke to so many people at those schools. I think, now looking back, that I must have spoken to them. They didn’t leave a big impression on me but they did on Dad. They all died in the order I had visited the campuses. It wasn’t the same day. Sometimes it was days, sometimes it was weeks, after I was there but they were killed in the order I visited their colleges.

“I had spoken to them, they had talked to me, told me stuff. And my dad was either with me or I excitedly poured out the news of my maybe-future-classmates to him. Susan Olsen had welcomed me into her room when I asked her what the dorms were like. My dad had been standing next to me when I saw her poster. He might have strangled her there, while the screaming guy wearing a party hat watched.

“For the two days after I saw Elise Nichols’ photo, I read every single article I could find about the Minnesota Shrike and everything I could find about anonymous police tips. But my brain kept telling me I was wrong. My loving father — a member of the PTA, who told off parents for getting aggressive at soccer games, who bought me Teen People when I was sick, who drove Marissa and me to the mall without complaining — couldn’t possibly be a serial killer. All the evidence said it was him. But my heart told me not to be absurd. Then I was reading about informing on your family to the cops. There were several accounts of the cops not having enough evidence and letting the guy go and then he killed the person he knew had told on him. I was terrified, shocked and still didn’t know if I believed it. I was mulling it over, comforting myself with the knowledge that I had three weeks before my next college visit. But I kept thinking I had to be making a huge mistake. My dad was a good, kind, loving man.

“Then the phone call happened. Then I knew it was all true.

“I guess I’ll never know the answers to any of my questions. Just before he cut my throat, just before he died, with the knife already against my neck, my dad told me that he had to kill those girls because he didn’t want to kill me. I don’t know why he wanted to kill me, what it was that drove him to do what he did. But, I do know how he got the drop on the girls he did kill: I accidentally fed him the information. I talked to probably a dozen kids at every school we visited and he just picked the girls with a passing resemblance.

“I’m left here with an ugly scar, a dead mom, a dead best friend and a dead dad and sometimes it feels like every single part of that is my fault. The girls, his victims, are almost too abstract. He killed them and I remember speaking to a few of them, but the idea of his killing them is still foreign to me. Here’s what is what’s easy to grasp:

“- the look on Mom’s face when he stabbed her
- the weird slippery feeling of being covered in my own blood
- the sensation of choking on hot liquid in my throat
- the look or horror on Will’s face as he came into my kitchen
- the noise of Will shooting my dad
- the way my dad slumped down, as though sitting with his back against the kitchen counter saying, ‘See, see,’ as he died
- the way Will tried to hold my throat closed even though he was shaking and sort of crying
- the calm and doctor-like way Hannibal acted as he brushed Will aside and took on the task of keeping me alive
- the last conversation I had with Marissa; she was wearing a scarf I had lent her; she told me she knew I wasn’t a killer
- seeing Marissa hung up on the antlers in Dad’s cabin.

“Maybe all of that could have been avoided if I had called the cops. Maybe the Copy Cat wouldn’t have killed Cassie Boyle or Marissa. Maybe my dad would have been arrested. For approximately forty-three hours, I thought maybe my dad was a killer, and that it was probably important for me to call the cops. I didn’t call the cops.

“Sometimes I wonder if my mom knew. She watched the news and she was smart. Then I tell myself that that’s just victim blaming. I miss my mom, I miss Marissa and, yes, I miss my dad. All I can say, in my own defense, is that I just wanted to learn about colleges from the actual students and that not watching the local news isn’t supposed to have such large consequences.”

Will put it down and breathed out very slowly. He handed the pages to Hannibal and said, “I think I have to go see her. She must be worried.” He stroked Daniel and waited silently.

Hannibal finished reading and said, “I thought it would be something else.” Then he exhaled very slowly.

“What?”

“I suppose that if Abigail is being honest…” he breathed out again. “I wanted to be helpful. When we were in that trailer, you were taking the boxes out to the car so that we could read

them after going to the Hobbs house. I called the number, wanted to be sure the Hobbs were there. Abigail picked up; I asked to speak to her father. I told him that I was working as an independent contractor for the FBI and that I wanted to check to be sure he was at home… I thought I was helping."

Will swallowed a couple of times, "Does Abigail know?"

Hannibal nodded, "She forgave me. I thought I was being helpful."

"So are those the last of our secrets?" asked Will. "Is everything out there now?"

Hannibal appeared to think about it and then said, "I think so."

Will nodded, "Why did you call? We already going to go. Why didn't you tell me before we got there?"

"You didn't find me interesting. I thought Hobbs would say something about me calling and you would see me as proactive," Hannibal had a haunted look on his face. "I didn't know I would cause that sort of damage."

Will leaned in to hug him. "What a mess, what a horrible mess." Hannibal hugged him close. "Abigail survived. You didn't mean it. You've been living with this guilt all by yourself?"

"Abigail knew," said Hannibal.

Will stroked the back of his head, "I love you. It's the past now. I love you." Hannibal pulled back to kiss him.

"Thank you," said Hannibal. "You should go talk to Abigail."

"Are you okay?"

"I've known about the phone call for months and months, Will," Hannibal said with a sad small smile. "Send Abigail my love. This is a private between the two of you."

Will nodded then he called, "Buster, come here, Buster!" Daniel looked up from where he had burrowed into Will's side. "Not you, Daniel, relax." Buster ran into the room and sat obediently at Will's feet, "We're going to go visit Abigail."

"You're taking Buster?" asked Hannibal.

Will nodded, "To show her I'm still on her side." He kissed Hannibal before standing. "We'll be back in a couple of hours."

Hannibal reached out to stroke his face. "I love you too, Will. I'm so pleased I have you in my life."

"I'm glad we have each other."

"You forgot about the floor, but I'll pick up the buffer for you."

That made Will give a bitter laugh, he had forgotten but not because of traumatic sex, “Thank you.”

“They’re my floors too, in a way.”

Will buckled Buster into a harness in the back seat and Will said, “We’re going to go see Abigail; you’ll like that.” He sang along with his music, Buster barked backup for him. At the hospital he parked and said, “You won’t be a brat about your leash, right? You’re going to be a good boy, right?” Buster just looked at him, not understanding the question.

Will got the leash out of the back and opened the door for Buster, hooking the leash before releasing the harness. They entered the hospital and Will smiled at the receptionist. “Will Graham for Abigail Hobbs,” he said with a smile. “And Buster,” he pointed down. “He’s her dog.”

“She’s in with a visitor,” said the receptionist.

“Right, JT, can I show myself out to the garden?”

“I’m sorry, the visitor is her lawyer; I can’t have you interrupt.”

Will gave a half laugh at that and said, “I’ll text her, thank you.” He went to sit in one of the four chairs in the waiting area. He typed quickly, “I’m in your waiting room. The lady at the desk won’t let me come back as JT is a lawyer. Come get me when you can.”

A minute later his phone beeped and it said, “Coming.” Moments later, Abigail came in, looking nervous, then she saw Buster and she smiled. “If you brought Buster, you can’t totally hate me.”

“I don’t hate you at all, Abigail.” He stood and hugged her, moving slow so she could tell him not to if she wanted.

But she hugged him tightly. “Thank you. Did you read it all?”

“Every word. I’m doing the floor in your room today and tomorrow; we’ll get your furniture when you’re ready. Yes, I read it all and you have a home with me and Hannibal.” She clung to him and he stroked her hair. Then Buster was whining and Abigail laughed, a tired sound and pulled away.

“Come here,” she crouched to scoop him up. To Will, she said, “come back into the garden, JT and I are having watermelon.”

“Sounds great,” Will agreed and followed her back, releasing Buster’s leash from his grasp.

Outside, the garden was as beautiful as always and JT was sitting in the grass. The man smiled, “Will and Buster. Come join us. Will, you can share my fork.”

Will laughed as he sat. He accepted the fork and took a bite of the melon. It was juicy, crunchy and sweet. “That’s delicious.”

“I would have expected you to be freaked out at sharing a fork,” said Abigail, settling with Buster in her lap.

“‘Cause I’m so weird you just automatically add in germaphobe,” he smiled. “No, Abigail, I’m not a germaphobe. I don’t mind sharing a fork with my second oldest friend.”

“Second oldest?” asked JT with a laugh. “Who has stuck around longer than me?”

“Daddy,” said Will.

“That’s fair,” said JT.

“Will, I’m sorry. If you want me to change anything I said about you,” Abigail started.

“I don’t mind being called weird, Abigail. What you wrote about me was very kind. I was very touched,” he took another bite of watermelon. “Yes, you called me weird, you also called me your friend. Pretending I’m not weird isn’t kindness; it’s ignoring reality. I liked what you said, Abigail.” He thought of the snippets of her book that he had read, “Your friends called you ‘Abs’ do you prefer that to Abigail?”

She shrugged, “I don’t really mind.”

“I was called Billy growing up, I hated it. After I lost my virginity, things went kind of pear-shaped and my dad said, ‘Billy, you got anything you want to add before we close this chapter and never look back?’ And I said, ‘I hate the name Billy; it’s so ugly and childish.’ In the end, I lost my virginity and got my dad, doctors and teacher to call me Will. My older brothers never gave in… I can’t stand my brothers.” He stabbed a very red bit of melon.

Abigail nodded and then said, “After everything in my kitchen… I didn’t think you, or Hannibal or Dr. Bloom were going to be around long enough for it to matter. I prefer Abs to Abigail. Only strangers call me Abigail and people in professional capacities. My parents mostly called me Abby, but that was sort of private with just them.”

“I’ll call you Abs,” said Will.

“Thanks,” she smiled, “Maybe, if we get in a fight and you irritate me, I’ll call you Billy — just to irritate you.”

“I do find that irritating,” agreed Will, taking one last bite of watermelon before handing the fork to JT. “Thanks for sharing.”

“I don’t know if I want your germy fork,” said JT, jokingly, “I don’t know where your mouth has been.”

“All the same places as yours in the last twenty-four hours except replace Bev with Hannibal. How was Bev this morning?”

“Phenomenal,” said JT with a grin.

“I meant mood-wise. I didn’t need to know that… I don’t think I should know that,” said Will.

“Oh, sorry,” said JT. “She’s good. We’re going to meet up for a nightcap tonight. She had to work today.”

“Jack wanted me to work too, but Bev said no for me.”

“I liked her,” said Abigail.

“She’s a nice person,” agreed Will. “So are you, Abs. I read a lot of self-doubt, not just in your telling of what happened with the girls, but in the voice you spoke of me in. You’re a nice person; I’m not friends with people who aren’t good.”

“Nicholas Boyle,” she said softly, looking at him. JT didn’t even blink as she said it. Will had thought he might know but he knew JT’s mind, he knew that JT would have listened when she spoke.

Nodding, Will thought for a moment and said, “He snuck into your house, knocked Alana unconscious, he threw you against the wall after sneaking up on you in the woods and then creeping through your house. How did you feel when he was screaming with you pinned against the wall?”

“My mind went blank with terror.”

“History is one long list of things people didn’t necessarily want to happen that still happened,” said Will. “I’m glad you’re here. I’m glad you protected yourself.”

“As a lawyer,” said JT, speaking softly as though trying not to shatter the thin glass around the moment, “It would be very, very easy to argue self-defense. As your ghostwriter and friend, do you want that in the book? Because we can put it out there and get you the very best lawyer — you won’t go to jail. But if the point of this book is to help you move on with your life and help you to get people to stop asking you questions, well, what do you want to do?”

“I still haven’t decided that,” said Abigail.

“You’re thinking of putting it out there?” asked Will, surprised.

“I wish I had never covered it up,” she shrugged.

“That’s because you’re a good person,” said Will with a smile.

JT was smiling as he said, “Will, I’m really glad you stopped by to tell Abigail you still care for her in person. That’s wonderful. But, I’d like you to leave, please. You have your floors to focus on. Abigail and I get very little time in person and we have work.”

“Of course, but why didn’t you switch over to calling her Abs immediately?” asked Will.

“We have a professional relationship. We’re keeping it that way until it’s published and the publicity stuff is done. Then I’m going to get very drunk with an eighteen-year-old and we might get tattoos.”

“He’s reticent about the tattoo,” said Abigail.

Laughing, Will stood, “Enjoy the rest of your day. JT, we’re meeting for dinner tonight?”

“Yeah, this place kicks me out at six. So, I’ll pick you up at six-thirty.”

“Come to the back door, I’m not touching the kitchen floor.”

“Great, see you in about five hours.”

Reclaiming Buster’s leash, Will kissed the top of Abigail’s head, “See you soon, Abs.”

End Notes

Before anyone asks, I will confirm that, yes, Abigail is telling the truth. I never really wrote this as an AU, it's pretty much exactly the same as the show except Hannibal decided to extinguish the fire in Will's brain earlier than in the show and then realized just how much he loved Will. But, I really wanted to make Abigail easier to forgive. Also, if we accept that this Abigail was innocent in her father's crime, when Nicolas Boyle threw her up against that wall, she would have been even more scared and innocent. In this, it's totally self defense. Her mistake was letting Hannibal get rid of the body instead of just screaming for help. But she really is a good girl.

Hannibal on the other hand is just Hannibal, he called the Hobbs house because he wanted to see what would happen.

Also, I'd like everyone to take a moment to imagine Richard, after the cops had to be called in with Will's whole under-aged-sex-journal scandal, saying, "Billy, is there anything else I should know?" And Will just saying, "I don't like the name Billy. I would prefer to be called Will." And Richard nodding and saying, "Okay then. Glad we cleared the air."

Comments and kudos are always very appreciated. I hope you liked this!

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!